

Message Text

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TAGS: SNAR, BE

SUBJECT: BRIEFING MATERIALS ON INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS
CONTROL

1. BELOW IS TEXT OF STATEMENT ON BELGIUM FROM THE 1977
EDITION OF THE UNCLASSIFIED BOOK ISSUED BY S/NM ENTITLED
QTE BRIEFING MATERIALS ON INTERNATIONAL NARCOTICS CONTROL.
UNQTE EMBASSY IS REQUESTED TO REVIEW TEXT AND REDRAFT OR
UPDATE AS NECESSARY FOR INCLUSION IN 1978 BRIEFING BOOK.
RESPONSE BY AUGUST 15 WOULD BE APPRECIATED IF POSSIBLE.

BEGIN TEXT

ILLCIT DRUG PROBLEM

ALTHOUGH THERE IS NO EVIDENCE OF ILLICIT PROCESSING OF
NARCOTICS IN BELGIUM, ORGANIZED TRANSHIPMENTS FOR INTER-
NATIONAL CONSUMPTION HAVE INCREASED AND THERE HAS BEEN AN
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INCREASE IN DRUG ABUSE IN RECENT YEARS, AS WELL AS
ILLEGAL IMPORTS OF LIMITED QUANTITIES OF NARCOTICS. CON-
SUMPTION OF HASHISH AND MARIHUANA CONSTITUTES THE MAIN
PROBLEM, AND MUCH OF THIS IS IMPORTED BY IMMIGRANT WORKERS
FOR INDIVIDUAL USE. LOCAL AUTHORITIES RECOGNIZE THAT THEY
ARE CONFRONTED WITH A POTENTIAL DRUG PROBLEM WHICH IS

STILL OF LIMITED PROPORTIONS. WHILE DRUG TRAFFICKING INTO BELGIUM HAS INCREASED, DRUG ABUSE APPEARS TO HAVE STABILIZED AT A RELATIVELY LOW LEVEL AS COMPARED WITH THE SITUATION IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES. INCREASED AVAILABILITY OF DRUGS IN THE NETHERLANDS COULD LEAD TO GREATER USE IN BELGIUM IN VIEW OF THE OPEN BORDER.

DRUG CONTROL EFFORTS

CURRENT LEGISLATION PROHIBITS POSSESSION OF MARIHUANA AND ADDICTIVE DRUGS ALTHOUGH PENALTIES ARE MILD: TWO-YEAR IMPRISONMENT AND A FINE OF \$200 FOR USE OR UNAUTHORIZED POSSESSION. THE BELGIAN PARLIAMENT PASSED NEW LEGISLATION IN JUNE 1975 INCREASING PENALTIES FOR DRUG TRAFFICKING, WITH PARTICULARLY SEVERE PENALTIES FOR ORGANIZED TRAFFICKING (UP TO 20 YEARS). A LEGISLATIVE EFFORT TO PROVIDE FOR REHABILITATION OF DRUG USERS FAILED LARGELY BECAUSE OF A RELUCTANCE TO FINANCE THE NECESSARY REHABILITATION EFFORTS. THE NEW LAW IS PROVING BENEFICIAL IN THE TOTAL BELGIAN EFFORT TO DISCOURAGE DRUG TRAFFICKERS FROM USING BELGIUM AS A TRANSIT POINT FOR DRUGS FOR OTHER MARKETS, PARTICULARLY AMSTERDAM.

A NEW BUREAU OF CRIMINAL INFORMATION WAS ESTABLISHED IN THE MINISTRY OF JUSTICE IN 1971, CHARGED WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR COLLECTION ALL AVAILABLE INTELLIGENCE ON DRUG MATTERS. VIOLATIONS REQUIRING FOLLOW-UP ARE REFERRED FOR INVESTIGATIONS AND ARRESTS TO REGIONAL BRIGADES OF THE POLICE JUDICIAIRE, TO THE GENDARMERIE, OR TO LOCAL POLICE UNITS. BELGIAN ENFORCEMENT EFFORTS HAVE IMPROVED SUBSTANTIALLY OVER THE PAST FEW YEARS. EXTENSIVE IN-DEPTH TRAINING, BOTH IN-COUNTRY AND IN THE US, HAS RAISED THE LEVEL OF PERFORMANCE, BUT OVERALL EFFECTIVENESS CONTINUES TO BE HAMPERED BY LACK OF COOPERATION AMONG BELGIAN ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES.

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BELGIUM HAS NOT YET RATIFIED THE PROTOCOL TO AMEND THE SINGLE CONVENTION ON NARCOTIC DRUGS OF 1961 OR THE CONVENTION OF PSYCHOTROPIC SUBSTANCES. BELGIUM HAS COOPERATED IN EXTRADITION AND EXPULSION OF DRUG TRAFFICKERS WHEN REQUESTED. THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT CONTRIBUTED \$25,000 TO THE UN FUND FOR DRUG ABUSE CONTROL IN 1973. FURTHER CONTRIBUTIONS WERE DELAYED UNTIL EARLY 1977, WHEN THE GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCED THAT IT WOULD PLEDGE \$26,300 ANNUALLY BEGINNING IN 1977.

U.S. PROGRAMS

THE BELGIANS HAVE CLEARLY INDICATED THEY WANT A MORE EFFECTIVE ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM, AND ARE CONTINUING TO COOPERATE WITH THE UNITED STATES, OTHER GOVERNMENTS, AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO ACHIEVE THIS GOAL. THE BELGIAN GOVERNMENT HAS EXPRESSED A KEEN INTEREST IN RAISING THE LEVEL OF ITS OWN DRUG ENFORCEMENT TRAINING CAPABILITY. THREE DEA REPRESENTATIVES ARE STATIONED AT BRUSSELS, AND THE BELGIAN CUSTOMS COOPERATES CLOSELY WITH REGIONAL U.S. CUSTOMS OFFICIALS STATIONED AT PARIS. TRAINING OF JUDICIAL POLICE OFFICERS HAS BEEN PROVIDED BY DEA AND CUSTOMS. EACH AGENCY CONDUCTED MONTH-LONG SEMINARS IN 1975. EACH WAS WELL-RECEIVED AND CONTRIBUTED TO THE OVER-ALL EFFORT TO ENHANCE BELGIAN DRUG INTERDIC-
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TION CAPABILITY. TWO BELGIAN OFFICERS ARE SCHEDULED TO ATTEND THE SIX-WEEK DEA TRAINING COURSE IN WASHINGTON IN APRIL 1977. THIS IS EXPECTED TO CONTRIBUTE SUBSTANTIALLY TO BELGIUM'S EFFORT TO IMPROVE ITS EXPERTISE IN THE AREA OF TRAINING.

END TEXT

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